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A PROCESS TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION MARKETING PLAN

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88

ABSTRACT

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TITLE: A Process To Develop A National Forest Recreation Marketing Plan

ABSTRACT: As a part of the National Recreation Strategy, marketing has been identified by the Chief of the Forest Service as a means to achieve customer satisfaction and other recreation goals. The Forest Service is truly "breaking new ground" in the area of marketing. A realistic process is needed to blend marketing principles with forest resources to develop recreation marketing plans for national forests.

The strategic marketing planning process provides the framework for a four faceted approach to the development of a recreation marketing plan:

1. Strategic Marketing Planning
2. Marketing Research
3. Internal Marketing
4. The Marketing Plan

Internal marketing is the vital component of the forest's marketing effort. Organizational understanding and commitment to marketing are essential for the marketing program to work. The aim of this paper is to identify a process for effective marketing understanding and implementation allowing national forests to meet the needs of the recreating public.

Keywords: Marketing, Marketing Research, Internal Marketing, Customer Satisfaction

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....PAGE 1

INTRODUCTION.....PAGE 4

Statement of Purpose.....PAGE 4

LITERATURE REVIEW.....PAGE 6

MARKETING PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.....PAGE 7

Strategic Marketing Planning.....PAGE 8
National Recreation Strategy.....PAGE 9
Mission.....PAGE 9
Goals.....PAGE 9
Objectives.....PAGE 9

Analysis of External Environment.....PAGE 9
Public Competitive Macro Market.....PAGE 10

Analysis of Internal Environment.....PAGE 14
Human Resources.....PAGE 14
Natural Resources.....PAGE 15
Organizational Resources.....PAGE 15

Forest Level Recreation Strategy.....PAGE 17
Mission.....PAGE 17
Goals.....PAGE 18
Objectives.....PAGE 18

Market Research.....PAGE 19
Collection and Analysis of Data.....PAGE 19
Forest Service Customer Information.....PAGE 20
Secondary Sources.....PAGE 21
Random Telephone Survey.....PAGE 22
Focus Groups.....PAGE 22

Internal Marketing.....PAGE 29

Forest Commitment to Marketing.....PAGE 30
Marketing Marketing.....PAGE 30
Forest Service Focus Group.....PAGE 30
Marketing Workshop.....PAGE 31
Attendees.....PAGE 32
Objectives.....PAGE 32
Marketing Specialist.....PAGE 32
Management Team Involvement.....PAGE 33

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Marketing Plan.....PAGE 35

Forest Strategy Emphasis.....PAGE 36
The District Marketing Plan.....PAGE 37
Executive Summary.....PAGE 37
Situation Analysis.....PAGE 38
Objectives and Goals.....PAGE 38
Marketing Strategy.....PAGE 39
Identification of Target Markets.....PAGE 39
Competitive Position Strategy.....PAGE 40
Marketing Mix - 7P's.....PAGE 41
Action Program.....PAGE 49
Budget.....PAGE 52
Forest Service Funded.....PAGE 52
Partnerships.....PAGE 52
Associations.....PAGE 53
Evaluation.....PAGE 53

SUMMARY.....PAGE 55

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....PAGE 56

APPENDIX.....PAGE 57

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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SUMMARY: The National Recreation Strategy identified a major role for marketing in national forest recreation management. This paper identifies a process to develop a national forest recreation marketing plan, utilizing partnerships that can be adopted by national forests. The process described is patterned after the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest (OSF) Recreation Marketing Plan.

The starting point was review of the strategic marketing plan for Tennessee Valley Authority's Land Between the Lakes (LBL), which has become the classic example of successful marketing of outdoor recreation by a federal agency.

A meeting, conducted by the OSF National Forest, to identify the steps necessary in developing a national forest recreation marketing plan, was attended by LBL staff and state and university representatives with job responsibilities in recreation management, tourism, and marketing. A brainstorming session identified key elements and steps in marketing plan development.

Ongoing dialogues with marketing academics, LBL marketing staff, and Forest Service (FS) recreation staff, shaped the direction of the OSF Marketing Plan. Four processes have been identified:

I. Strategic Marketing Planning Process
II. Marketing Research
III. Internal Marketing
IV. The Marketing Plan

Two Texts: Strategic Marketing for Non-Profit Organizations and Marketing Government and Social Services provided the theoretical framework.

Presently, very little "how to" information is available on national forest marketing planning, and FS staff with marketing expertise is severely limited. We are definitely "breaking new ground" in national forest marketing. In developing a recreation marketing plan, the management team should follow these recommendations:

1. Be aware -- A forest's management team must be made aware, from the outset, of the strategic planning process and its role.
2. Establish ownership by the forest's management team in the marketing plan. They should identify the recreation mission, goals, and objectives.
3. Seek out partnerships with university and state parks and tourism departments to accomplish market research.
4. Make internal marketing priority 1. How well marketing marketing to forest personnel is managed will determine the success of the marketing program.
5. Contract internal marketing workshop at forest level, followed by district workshops. Both workshops should include employee focus groups.
6. Keep the first year's marketing objectives simple. Concentrate on probable win situations.
7. Conduct either very good market research or none at all. There is no excuse for not knowing who your customers are and what they want.
8. Identify a marketing budget and staff assignment. The level of forest commitment will reflect the quality of the plan.
9. Make maximum use of publicity in promotions.
10. Have a marketing plan for each district.
11. Form a marketing and tourism association to support the forest's marketing program.
12. Never forget our recreation mission is in our name: Service
13. The same as Number 12.

INTRODUCTION

The Ozark-St.Francis National Forest (OSF) Marketing Plan evolved from direction in the National Recreation Strategy.

> "Our customers are changing. Find out who they might be, where they live, and what they want to experience on a visit to a National Forest. As you expand recreation opportunities, do not overlook those kinds of recreation that our National Forests can best provide. Match the people and place for customer satisfaction." (1)

Providing outdoor recreation opportunities for diverse publics while constantly striving for customer satisfaction is our mission. A strategic marketing plan is the tool with which we can achieve our mission by analyzing our external environment and customer needs and the FS resources available to meet those needs.

Statement of Purpose

The objective of this paper is to identify the strategic marketing planning process so it may be used as a working tool by national forests. The emphasis will be on a "how to" approach to developing a national forest marketing plan, written for natural resource managers with a rudimentary understanding of marketing. The process was developed by a district ranger with an

undergraudate degree in marketing. It was, however, written through a ranger's perspective, not a marketing major's.

The methodology is a blend of theory and practicality. It reflects what strategic marketing planning tells us we should do, and what we can realistically accomplish on the ground, given our in house marketing resources.

The following assumptions have been made:

1. The developers of national forest marketing plans, at first, will have several other duties and no background in marketing.

2. The paper primarily addresses the recreation resource. The strategic planning process and Internal Marketing sections will be applicable to all resources.

3. Challenge Cost-share opportunities will be pursued.

The direction from the Chief to develop marketing plans to achieve customer satisfaction and provide high quality outdoor recreation opportunities is clear. We must be guided by that direction and develop marketing plans resulting in satisfied customers whose needs have been met through partnerships with other government agencies, universities, and local community organizations. Opportunities abound to forge support from these partnerships and achieve customer/constituent satisfaction.

This paper is directed at the ultimate goal of customer satisfaction which will fulfill our mission: Service. After all, our mission is in our name.

STRATEGIC MARKETING PLANNING

Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations, third edition, and Marketing Government and Social Services provided the basic outline for the strategic planning section.

MARKETING RESEARCH

The marketing research approach evolved from discussions with Land Between the Lakes (LBL) and University of Arkansas and Arkansas Tech University staff. Two meetings, one to "identify the steps necessary to develop and implement a marketing plan for the Ozark-St.Francis N.F. recreation resources," and a market research partnership meeting, further refined the research direction presented.

INTERNAL MARKETING

Syme's "Recreation In The Forest Service: A Marketing Opportunity" and Marketing Government and Social Services identified the importance of organizational commitment and understanding of marketing. The author developed The Land Between The Lakes Marketing Workshop from discussions with LBL marketing staff.

THE MARKETING PLAN

The outline for the marketing plan relied primarily on Strategic Marketing For Nonprofit Organizations and Marketing Government and Social Services. Syme's "Recreation In The Forest Service: A Marketing Opportunity" and presentations from the Forest Service and Michigan State University Marketing Natural Resources Conference also provided direction for marketing plan development.

STRATEGIC MARKETING PLANNING

The Strategic Marketing Planning Process (SMPP) shows how the forest recreation marketing plan is developed. It will force the forest to look at its recreation mission, (the purpose of the organization), goals, (what the forest wants to become), and objectives, (what it intends to achieve). Simply stated, the SMPP is:

"...the process of maintaining a strategic tie between the organization's goals and capabilities and its changing market opportunities." And the belief that "...strategic planning should involve all levels of the organization." (emphasis added)(2)

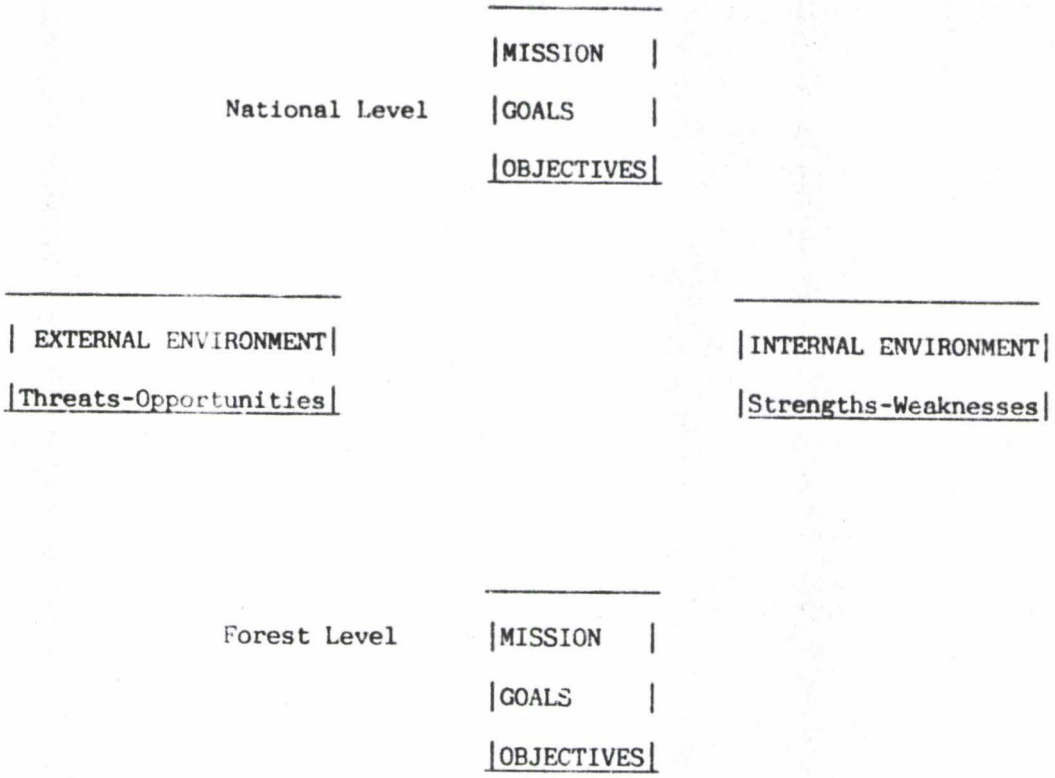
The SMPP consists of the following steps:(3)

1. Determine organization's mission, goals and objectives.
2. Analyze the external environment - threats and opportunities.
3. Analyze internal environment - strengths and weaknesses.
4. Determine marketing mission, goals, and objectives.
5. Formulate marketing strategy to reach specific objectives.
6. Establish organization structure to implement marketing strategy.
7. Develop action plans to carry out marketing strategy.
8. Establish benchmarks to measure achievement.
9. Implement strategy.
10. Assess performance.

Steps 1 through 5 are shown in Figure 1. Each district's marketing plan will identify the marketing strategy and address Steps 6 through 10.

FIGURE I

Strategic Marketing Planning



Forest Service Recreation Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The national level mission and goals have been identified in our National Recreation Strategy.

Mission: Finding creative and innovative ways to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the public. The emphasis will be customer satisfaction.

Goals:

-satisfy the customer

-strengthen and round out multiple use management

-meet forest planning goals

-promote tourism

-respond to nontraditional users

-develop partnerships

-provide more economic benefits to rural communities

-increase the quality of life for all Americans

Objectives:

-to be identified in each forest's marketing plan.

Analysis of External Environments

External environmental analysis looks at those environments outside the forest and identifies the threats and opportunities to reaching the FS mission, goals, and objectives.

The supervisor's office should coordinate the external environmental assessment. It should canvass the districts and ask each to identify external threats or opportunities. These will be compiled and summarized by the supervisor's office marketing coordinator for use during the marketing workshop (see Internal Marketing).

There are four external environments: 1) public, 2) competitive, 3) macro, and 4) market.(4) Examples of opportunities and threats for each are given.

1). Public environment - Individuals, groups, and organizations that take an interest in FS activities.

Threats

FS Staff - Staff who view marketing solely as "selling" and are opposed to it. Customer contact staff who have lost the meaning of service.

National Forest Customers - Their image of the FS as primarily providers of clear cut timber.

Special Interest Groups - Concerns that the recreation strategy and marketing are a step in total commercialization of FS recreation resources.

Opportunities

Media - Excellent source for achieving marketing strategy objectives, e.g., promotions, image development.

Special Interest Groups - Emphasizing customer service and satisfaction as a management philosophy will create favorable FS image.

Local Publics - Promoting tourism will gain support from business community.

General Public - Communicating a market based service philosophy will change FS image and encourage general public support.

2). Competitive Environment - Individuals, groups, and organizations that compete for services provided by the forest.

Threats

Federal, State and Local Suppliers of Outdoor Recreation - Development and expansion goals may conflict with forest's goals.

Private Sector - May construe forest marketing plan as a business threat.

Opportunities

All Suppliers of Recreation Opportunities - Competitive analysis allows forest to focus marketing effort on those customer needs not being provided by other sectors and provide greatest public benefit.

State Recreation - Working with state recreation departments and assessing state programs will minimize duplication of services and allow for maximum public benefit. It will also communicate the idea that the forest is a working partner and not competing for tourist dollars.

3). Macro Environment - The broader environmental elements that affect forest use:

-Demographic

-Economic

-Political

-Technological

-Social-Cultural

-Natural

Marketing research will provide demographic data of our customers : age, sex, family makeup, education, occupation, and income. This is where recreation trends should be considered so the forest can prepare to meet the needs of a changing recreating public. In assessing the threats and opportunities in the macro environment, we should keep aware of significant trends. (5)

-the American population is getting older. Responding to the needs of older recreationists should be a priority.

-Americans are moving away from one long vacation to several long weekend trips.

-single family households will increase significantly.

-the ethnic diversity (Blacks,Asians,Hispanics) of urban communities will continue to grow.

The forest's political environment must be considered since it impacts marketing decisions. State and local politics may dictate growth or development of resources that conflict with marketing goals. Conversely, state support for economic development and promoting tourism provides a grand partnership opportunity, leading to increased public benefits.

4). Market Environment - The market environment is composed of individuals, groups, and organizations that the forest will be working with or will influence during preparation and implementation of the marketing plan.

Concentration should be on the forest's target customers and opportunities for partnerships.

Target customers will be addressed under Marketing Research. Partnerships that will help in reaching marketing goals, other than research, should be looked at here. Existing partners that have developed through challenge cost share proposals, e.g., chambers of commerce, recreation activity clubs, recreation activity clubs, and state organizations should be identified.

Their role in the forest's marketing plan should be assessed and they should be contacted to gauge the level of support and expertise that may be available.

Investigate forming a Marketing and Tourism Association that will support the forest's marketing program.(6) See Budget in The Marketing Plan for objectives of the Association.

Analysis of Internal Environment

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses is needed at the forest and district level to respond to the existing and potential threats and opportunities in the external environment. As with the external analysis, the supervisor's office should coordinate this assessment by asking each district to identify strengths and weaknesses that can be used to respond to the external opportunities and threats. The marketing coordinator should compile and summarize the responses for use in developing the forest's recreation mission, goals, and objectives during the marketing workshop.

Human Resources - Strengths to consider are the forest's staff expertise in managing the recreation resources, intimate knowledge of local publics, the volunteer program, and resources available through partnerships and associations. Weaknesses to consider are staff reluctance to accept marketing as the means of achieving the recreation mission, misunderstanding marketing, and the lack of marketing expertise.

Natural Resources - The uniqueness and abundance of national forest recreation opportunities are major strengths that each forest has. Accessibility may be a weakness.

Organizational Resources - The image of the FS as a provider of outdoor recreation is a weakness that must be addressed. Every opportunity to use the media, partnerships, and other communication channels, should be identified. The use of newspapers, the second most important information source for outdoor recreation, is an extremely low cost means of image shaping.

Newly acquired budget flexibility is a strength forests now have to shift financial resources to meet marketing goals. The challenge cost share program, which financed the entire cost of the marketing research effort for the OSF National Forest, is a means of leveraging forest dollars as well as establishing a foundation for continued support and expertise for the marketing program.

Summary of Strategic Marketing Planning

FIGURE 2 summarizes the information available to the forest by following the SMPP.

FIGURE 2

Summary of SMPP Information

STEPS	WHAT FOREST KNOWS	
1. External Environmental Analysis	Threats	Opportunities
-Publics	Identified at forest	
-Competition	and district level	
-Macro		
-Marketing		
2. Internal Environmental Analysis	Strengths	Weaknesses
-Human Resource	Identified at forest	
-Natural Resources	and district level	
-Organizational		
-Competitive Position		
3. Comparison of Opportunities and Threats with Strengths and Weaknesses		

Forest Level Recreation Strategy

The forest has assessed the threats and opportunities in the external environment and the strengths and weaknesses within the forest. Comparison of the environments will allow the forest to develop its recreation marketing strategy, comprising the mission, goals, and objectives. The following are examples from the OSF National Forest:

Mission - The forest mission statement should answer the following questions:(7)

-"what is our business?"

-"who is the customer?"

-"what will our business be?"

-"what should our business be?"

OSF Mission Statement

To provide and inform the public of recreation opportunities responsive to the needs and expectations of a diverse and changing recreating public within the guidelines of the OSF National Forest LRMP. Emphasis will be customer satisfaction through service and professionalism. Environmental awareness, values, and responsibilities will be communicated to our customers through education and interpretation. Partnerships will be the primary vehicle in satisfying customer needs and providing support to meet state and local goals.

Goals

In goal development, the forest is identifying what it wants to accomplish at a future time. For the forest marketing plan, goals should be selected that are achievable in the short run - two years or less - so as not to discourage the marketing effort. Also, an evaluation of the marketing plan is an annual process which is necessary to determine if goals are being achieved.

OSF Goals

1. Satisfy customers
2. Develop a marketing based philosophy of resource management
3. Assist in the growth of rural economies
4. Promote tourism
5. Achieve goals as identified in forest LRMP

Objectives

Objectives are quantified goals with specific dates for accomplishment. Objectives, like goals, should be attainable, realistic, and simple, especially for the forest's first marketing planning effort. Eventually, objectives should be defined in terms of customer benefits.

Each district will identify its own objectives that will contribute to meeting the forest's goals.

MARKET RESEARCH

"When you go fishing, do you use the bait you like or the fish like?"

Jack Gray

Marketing Specialist

The marketing concept has been defined as:

> "...determining the needs and wants of the marketplace and then delivering the desired satisfaction in an effective way."

An effective marketing research program will tell the forest who their existing and potential customers are, where they are, what they want, and why they chose a particular recreation activity.

A three faceted approach to answering the who, where, and what of our customers is:

1. Collection and analysis of existing customer use data
2. Random telephone survey
3. Focus groups

Collection and analysis of existing customer use data

Start with the information the forest already has about its customers.

Immediately start gathering and consolidating all customer use data. Set up a DG marketing hotline so requests for information and updates can be sent to all district rangers at once. The following breakdown identifies some available sources of customer information:

Forest Service "In House" Sources

Visitor Logs - An inexpensive way of generating customer information that will reveal the who, where, and possibly the why of the visit. There should be one in every supervisor's office and district office as well as locations on the forest where people look for forest information or sign in, e.g., trail heads.

Fee Envelopes - Gather every one, no matter the age, to find out where, what, why, when. This is another inexpensive means of finding out customer information.

Scoping Responses (Soliciting Public Input) - Look at scoping responses for land management planning, prescriptions and environmental analysis purposes.

Site Survey - Any surveys conducted at recreation sites will tell who, what, why, where, and when.

PARVS - The FS, in cooperation with other federal agencies, conducted a Public Area Recreation Visitor Survey in 1988.(8) The PARVS was national

in scope, but can provide meaningful data for a forest's market area (where) and who.

Forest Service Employees - Ask your own people what they have observed and heard from the customers, not what they think the visitors want. If they do not know, then tell them to start asking.

Other useful non-FS sources at the national, regional, state, and local levels are:

PCAO - The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors.(9) Review results from the Market Opinion Research Survey.

Park Service - 1982-1983 A Nationwide Outdoor Recreation Survey.(10)

Tourism Associations - Regional, state, and local tourism associations.

At the state level, there is a host of useful tourist information and cooperators willing to assist.

- State Parks and Tourism Department - They will provide scorp (state comprehensive outdoor recreation plans), annual tourism summary reports, customer surveys, state park plans, tourism association data, and contacts.
- State recreation clubs and tourism associations - At local level, chambers of commerce and tourism associations.

Random Telephone Survey

A random telephone survey will answer who, what, where, why, and when of existing customers. Since the survey is random, potential and nontraditional users will be contacted, as well as current users.

The surveyor develops a questionnaire in collaboration with the forest, and provides an analysis that will help determine target markets and support other marketing plan decisions.

Focus Groups

A focus group is a group(6-10) of homogeneous users who engage in a specific recreation activity, e.g., hikers, hunters, pleasure motorists. The objective is to stimulate in-depth discussion about their recreation experiences, to determine user motives and feelings that would not be found in a written or oral survey.

Focus groups will provide insightful information about a segment of the forest's market through small group contact that may be used to provide marketing direction to the larger segment.

During the first research effort, the forest should identify 5 or 6 major forest user groups for focus groups. The facilitators of the focus groups

must be trained to conduct the groups and provide analysis that can be translated for use in the marketing plan.

In summary, the three-faceted approach to marketing research will allow the forest to immediately use all available customer data, reach potential and nontraditional users through a random survey, and acquire an in-depth understanding of customer needs through focus groups.

Marketing Research Methodology

This section will describe methods of getting the marketing research job accomplished through partnerships.

Timing

Marketing research should be started immediately due to the time necessary to gather and analyze the data. It would also be helpful during the internal marketing workshop to have real data: customer information that can be shared with the forest management team to make marketing realistic and more credible.

Contractor Agreements With Academic Institutions

Use the local or state university to do your marketing research. Every state university has a marketing department and may also have a department of recreation, tourism, or leisure studies.

University marketing programs have required courses in market research and perhaps graduate programs, which is even better. Establish a partnership arrangement with the marketing department, keeping your objectives simple, to do the following:

1. Analysis of FS customer information provided by the forest, e.g., fee envelopes, logs, etc.

2. Collection and analysis of tourist/recreationist information available through state parks and tourism departments. Analysis and results should include recommendations for the forest's marketing plan and ways to collect customer use data and develop an ongoing customer information collection system.

3. Analysis of all secondary sources: sources outside FS relating to recreation use and data collected for other reasons, that have recreation use relevance. Examples are customers or members of ski resorts, trail clubs, Good Sam Club. See Appendix A for an example of a proposal from the marketing department of a state university.

Costs will vary depending on forest size and quantity of data to analyze, but a university partnership will be substantially less expensive than a consultant. Another advantage in working with a university is the additional partners that will be attracted to the

FS/university relationship. Association with a university marketing department increases legitimacy,and validates the research information. Sponsorship by academia will also aid the internal marketing efforts.

Academic institutions with leisure or recreation departments will be willing to participate in a recreation research program. Most will have the student labor and equipment to do collation, analysis, and site specific surveys. If the department does not have the trained staff to conduct a focus group, ask the psychology department for a facilitator. See Appendix B for an example of market research using focus groups.

Other departments within the university should be contacted for partnership work. Centers for research and public policy regularly do survey work for different fields of government and have equipment to do random telephone surveys. They will be a tremendous aid in helping define and reach the forest's target market area since they work with metropolitan statistical areas. Their business is research and analysis, so they can provide past, present, and potential customer profiles. See Appendix C for an example of a random telephone survey proposal.

Other Methods of Marketing Research

State parks and tourism departments want to promote tourism and recreation

use in their state. When you tell them you are developing a marketing plan to fill a recreation niche on the national forest(s), you will have an invaluable partner with much state recreation customer data and the personnel and hardware for analysis. State tourism departments also have the structure for continual marketing research. See if they will ask a few questions directly related to your national forest in their visitor information center survey. Start small, by asking them for their visitor information centers' summary, which will identify trip origins for state visitors. In so doing, you have just taken the first step in defining your market area and target markets. The state will also make available information on regional, state, and local tourism and economic development, agencies, and associations. You will get their attention once you tell them you are developing a marketing plan and want first to identify who our customers are and what they want. Also, investigate any economic development programs existing in your state. The equation is simple: recreation marketing = tourists = dollars = economic development. Remember, target marketing means you can focus your marketing plan on a specific geographic area in the state, e.g., economically depressed areas.

Marketing services agencies and consultants will be costly. There will be opportunities for partnerships with the state tourism associations and local organizations with tourist interest, e.g., chambers of commerce, to share the cost of private consultants. At first, marketing consultants may be of greatest value in reaching target markets during promotions.

Consider, also, state agencies not directly involved in tourism. Game and fish or wildlife resource departments are vitally interested in what their users want and expect from a hunting and/or fishing visit. They also are in the recreation business and want satisfied customers.

Contracting Services

Appendices D, E, and F are examples of marketing research services contracts where the services have been contributed. During the forest's first research effort, keep the objectives simple.

The appendix examples are partnerships where part of the services have been contributed through cost sharing. Even without cost share funds available, ask for contributed services. Universities and state agencies realize the FS is non-profit, and in the case of universities, there are academicians earnestly seeking project associations with national organizations.

Cost

Marketing research must be funded to be successful. If the forest does not have reliable and valid data on the who, what, where, when, and why of its customers, then the marketing plan is meaningless. Whether the forest does it in-house, in partnerships, or by consultants, it will require some financing.

The OSF marketing research was done for $10,925.00. The cost covered the FS and secondary source research, random telephone survey, and focus groups, but did not include any salaries.

The actual cost of the research, without partnership contributions, would have been $18,350. A forest's first effort to conduct marketing research and establish an ongoing data collection system could be limited to FS and secondary source data analysis, which would keep the cost down. The focus groups and/or random telephone survey could be done later.

In summary, the effectiveness of the marketing plan will be determined by the quality of the marketing research. Garbage in, garbage out, applies to marketing as well as computers.

Recognize that research needs funding, the level determined by the depth of the partnerships, cost share programs, and state and local support.

Keep your research objectives simple and start immediately to collect all available customer use data. Analysis takes time. For the first attempt, contract the market research so you will get valid data and develop the foundation for a continuing market research program.

INTERNAL MARKETING

Internal marketing - marketing marketing to our own people - is the most important part of the FS marketing planning process. Without complete organizational commitment to marketing, the forest's marketing plan will not only fail, but further degrade the FS recreation image by not keeping our commitments to SERVICE.

Our product in recreation is service. The aim of the forest's marketing plan is a satisfied customer. That satisfaction is earned through a marketing philosophy that equates marketing with service. Only with a forest-wide understanding and resolve to the marketing/service philosophy of doing business, will we change our image and provide repeated satisfaction to our customers.

An internal marketing process has already begun on your forest. The common misunderstanding that marketing is synonymous with selling is part of the mind set of natural resource managers. Marketing will be resisted because it is misunderstood and employees cannot relate to marketing or "selling", or see the role they play in the forest marketing plan or how marketing is the means of achieving district objectives.

To help allay the fears of marketing, start internal marketing immediately - concurrent with marketing research - by communicating to the forest's management team their role in the Strategic Marketing Planning Process. Inform them of your plans and progress from day one. See FIGURE 1 - forest level - mission, goals, and objectives.

Forest Commitment to Marketing

The Forest Supervisor must first express the forest's commitment to marketing and set the stage for a marketing based orientation to natural resource management. The supervisor's verbal commitment to marketing, however, is not enough. The forest management team must identify:

1. Staff marketing responsibility
2. Marketing budget

At a minimum, a marketing plan coordinator will be needed with a budget to begin marketing research and market marketing. Identifying a staff and budget begins the marketing commitment.

Marketing Marketing

Relevance and applicability are the keys in communicating what marketing is and its place in national forest management. One method of marketing marketing to the forest is using the success story of federal outdoor recreation.

Tennessee Valley Authority's Land Between the Lakes (LBL) is the classic example of a successful federal land management marketing program. Faced with major budget reductions, LBL switched from a product based to a

marketing based philosophy of recreation resource management. It worked. Now LBL has a marketing workshop which teaches not only the marketing concept, but its relevance and value in outdoor recreation management.

In March of 1989, the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest conducted a marketing workshop as the first step in its internal marketing program. The objectives of the workshop were to develop an understanding of the role, relevance, and applicability of marketing in achieving recreation goals of the forest and objectives of the districts. The LBL marketing workshop can be tailored to specific forest needs and objectives. See Appendix G for LBL marketing workshop contents.

I. Forest Service Focus Group (first half day)

Focus group conducted by LBL staff comprised of a representative group of 10 FS employees to identify:

A. Our customers perceptions

B. What "Service" means

C. What our recreation mission is

D. Barriers to a marketing based philosophy

II. Workshop Session (one day)

A. Attendees - Forest Management Team

1. Rangers

2. Assistant Rangers

3. Forest Staff Officers

4. Supervisor's Office Management Team

B. Workshop Objectives - The result of the FS focus group was interwoven in the topic discussions

1. Understanding what marketing is
2. Becoming "marketing ready"
3. Improving the forest's ability to respond to special interest groups
4. Gaining the knowledge necessary to manage public image
5. Recognizing marketing as a credible way of accomplishing goals. The results of any marketing research the forest has should be discussed here. Actual forest customer use data will allow for realistic examples and help make marketing credible.
6. Feeling ownership in the forest's marketing plan.
7. Recognizing and resolving the barriers to marketing.
8. Developing an understanding of the forest roles in the marketing process.

C. Marketing specialist - The objective of the specialist is to communicate in a "real life" context, the relevance and application of marketing: to help make marketing "real to rangers". Examples of possible speakers:

1. A Walt Disney Service Training Management staff
2. State tourism marketing staff
3. Jack Gray, Marketing Specialist , University of Wisconsin Extension Service

D. Management Team and the Forest Marketing Plan (2nd half day)

This session is vitally important. It establishes ownership in the forest's marketing plan and prevents the most common strategic planning error: INADEQUATE ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT.

"...One way to ensure the failure to strategic planning is to have plans developed and issued from 'the top' without participation from those lower down in the organization. The people involved in implementing the plan should be directly involved in developing it."(11)

Here is a marketing plan ownership process. Use facilitators for best results.

1. Forest Management Team reviews environmental analysis:
    a. external - opportunities, threats
    b. internal - strengths, weakness
2. Forest Management Team develops Recreation Mission Statement.
3. Forest Management Team identifies forest recreation goals.
4. Rangers - return to districts. Each district identifies recreation objectives to meet forest goals.
    a. keep objectives simple and achievable to prevent:
        1. discontentment with marketing
        2. frustration with another "plan"

3. overloading

4. discouragement from inability to reach objectives

b. objectives to have action plans

At the end of the 2 days, the rangers should:

1) know the forest is committed to marketing
2) know marketing is not just another "initiative", but a way of doing business
3) know marketing is the means of reaching specific district objectives
4) feel ownership in the forest's marketing plan.

Remember, for the marketing marketing workshop to be effective, it must be kept simple to understand and made "real for the rangers".

Two other sources that can provide internal marketing assistance are:

-Michigan State University Departments of Park and Recreation Resources

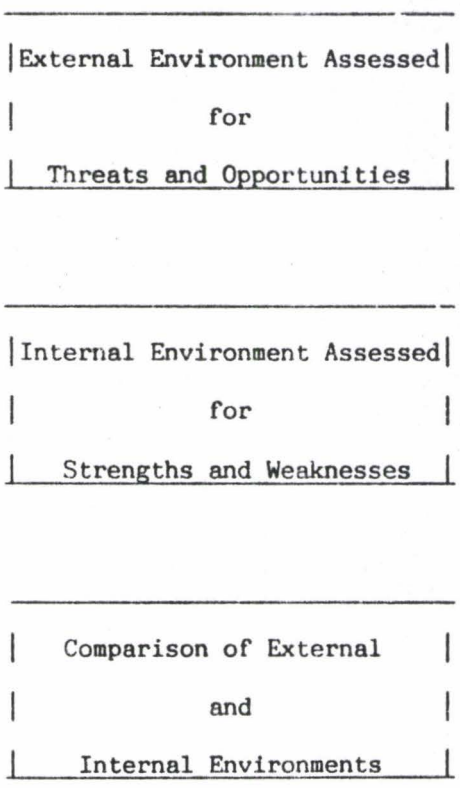
-University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Center for Recreation and Tourism

THE MARKETING PLAN

Before the final marketing plan for the forest can be written, several events should be completed.

Up to this point in the SMPP, the forest perspective has set the marketing direction. Upon completion of the Forest Strategy Emphasis, the district will begin the actual marketing plan. FIGURE 3 identifies the steps.

FIGURE 3


External Environment Assessed for Threats and Opportunities
Internal Environment Assessed for Strengths and Weaknesses
Comparison of External and Internal Environments

Marketing Research Analysis
and
Recommendations Completed

Marketing Marketing Workshop Conducted

Forest Recreation Mission
and
Goals Developed

Select Forest Strategy Emphasis

Forest Strategy Emphasis

The forest must decide the emphasis for the districts' marketing plans. The market penetration and replacement and extension strategies will provide the direction for the district's initial marketing effort.(12)

Market Penetration Strategy - The objective of this strategy is to improve customer support. The means is through improved customer service. Emphasize SERVICE.

Replacement and Extension Strategy - The objective is to increase customer satisfaction by improving or replacing existing programs. The forest's marketing research will have identified what programs.

The District Marketing Plan

It is time to depart from the forest's perspective to the district's. This is Part IV of the SMPP.

A suggested format for a district's marketing plan would contain the following sections:(13)

1. Executive Summary
2. Situation Analysis
3. Goals and Objectives
4. Marketing Strategy
5. Action Programs
6. Budget
7. Evaluation

Executive Summary

Summary of goals and recommendations of plan. This is helpful during the plan's review to see if goals were achieved.

Situation Analysis

This was accomplished at the forest level, but there will be specific situations in the district's environment that need to be assessed. Analyze the opportunities and threats (external environment) and strengths and weaknesses (within the district environment). The results of this analysis will be a match-up between the opportunities and threats and strengths and weaknesses, which will help in setting marketing goals and objectives.

Goals and Objectives

The forest and district goals may be the same. They were identified at the forest level during the internal marketing workshop. The forest's objectives will be the total sum of all the district objectives. Consider the following when formulating objectives:(14)

-Be specific - use quantifiable terms.
-Make them attainable
-Specify a time frame
-State in benefit terms, e.g., "to achieve customer satisfaction and respond to the needs of campers for interpretative services..."
-Keep them simple

Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy is the "Game Plan" by which the forest will reach its objectives. It has three parts: (See FIGURE 1)

1. Target Marketing
2. Positioning
3. Marketing Mix

Target Marketing

The recreation market for the forest is made up of heterogeneous groups: several different recreation activity groups and individuals exist that use the forest. The forest will first segment the user groups by some homogeneous characteristics so it may target a specific group with similar needs with its marketing effort. Examples of segmentation:

Recreation Activity	Demographic Breakdown	Geographic Breakdown
Skiing	Age: 40-60 Sex: Males Income: $35,000+	Within 150 miles of forest or 3 hrs driving time
Camping	Age: 50+ Family Makeup: Retired Income: $30,000	Within 300 miles of forest

The marketing research that has been done will provide this information. Once the forest has segmented its market, it can tailor its services to meet the identified segments' needs and develop the position strategy and marketing mix to bring the two together.

Number alone should not determine the target market. As a provider of recreation to all people, the forest should target "nontraditional" users as a market to reach. As stated earlier, marketing research that includes focus groups or random surveys would provide valid nontraditional user data that may be applied to market segmentation.

Positioning

The district's competitive position is determined by how its recreation opportunities are perceived by the target customers compared to the competitions' recreation offerings. The district must answer the following questions in determining its positioning strategy.

- What services/opportunites are being offered by competitors:
  - Other federal agencies
  - State agencies
  - Local government e.g., city parks
  - Private recreation sector

- What services/opportunities are not being provided?
- What is the district strategy?
  - Assess present district marketing position
  - Determine what position the district wants

At this point, the target markets (the customer segment you are appealing to) have been selected and the positioning strategy (the district's services/opportunities with the competitive edge) determined. The market research answered:

-who are my customers?

-what are my customers?

-what do my customers want and what are their motives for wanting a particular recreation activity?

Marketing Mix

The combination package or offering that responds to the needs of the target customers and meets the district objectives. The marketing mix is made up of the 7 P's.

1. Product (Service)
2. Price
3. Place
4. Promotions
5. Participants
6. Physical Evidence
7. Process of Service

Each of the 7 P's will be presented separately, but should be viewed in the context of how they support the competitive position of the district: the district's niche in the recreation market.

The "P's" will be presented as a working outline: Steps that should be followed and questions asked for that "P's" contribution to the marketing mix.

Product - The product in outdoor recreation is service. The service is offered through recreation opportunities (REC OPS) and their setting (camping,hiking, etc.). To insure customer satisfaction when providing REC OPS, it is necessary to view the recreation activity as a complete "package." Services that support or compliment the specific recreation activity should be provided, e.g., lodging, as a part of the skiing opportunity; ice for picnickers.(15)

In identifying the opportunities to be offered, the district should answer these questions:

1. Do the offerings reflect the marketing research: Are you giving the customers what they want?
2. Are the REC OPS consistent with the competitive niche?
3. Do the REC OPS contribute to meeting district objectives?
4. Are the REC OPS meeting the needs of the target market?
5. Is customer service the highest district priority?
6. Does the SERVICE respond to the total needs of your your customers?

The internal marketing program identifies marketing marketing at the district level and the role district employees play as SERVICE providers. Each annual marketing plan, however, should address how exemplary service is developed, maintained, and integrated in district mananagement. In promoting customer service as "Job One", consider the following:

-Customer service as a performance element for all district employees.

-Ongoing customer service training for all employees.

-Continual emphasis on service orientation, i.e., monthly "Service Tip" as regular part of Safety/Family meeting

-Quarterly customer service award

-Regular updating of "Service is in Our Name" campaign (16)

Price - Price is a tool that can and should be manipulated to achieve district objectives through the distribution of demand and use.

1. Lower fees to encourage use of one area/site over another, and vice versa.(17)
2. Change price to encourage off-season use.

Place - The objective in place is facilitating the process of getting the customer to the service.

1. Reach the potential customers during the trip planning stage.

-provide informational materials to:

-AAA offices

-Travel agents

-Chambers of Commerce

-Regional, state and local tourism offices

2. Make maximum use of the FS Scenic Byway Program. The FS Scenic Byway Program, and system, provides the ideal link between the customer and service, and is a unique promotional opportunity. Traveling to the district's recreation offering will be as much enjoyment as being there. A scenic byway on a forest will help differentiate its "product" and should be included in the promotional efforts.(18)
3. District ranger offices as sources of visitor information and recreational trip planning. Consider the following:

-Modify signing to include "National Forest Information".

-Establish "800" number.

-Develop a district recreation package identifying REC OPS on district.

-Customer oriented reservation system where appropriate.

Promotions - Promotion is communication and the function of the promotion strategy is either to inform, educate, persuade and/or remind.(19)

The emphasis of the promotion mix will depend on the objective(s), e.g., promotions to educate and inform will be the thrust of a forest's efforts to develop an image as a provider of unique recreation opportunities.

Four activities comprise the promotion mix that is used according to the promotion objective. FIGURE 4 shows the mix of options available. The activities are:(20)

Advertising: Communications paid and supported by the the agency transmitted through a mass medium, e.g., TV, newspaper, brochures.

Publicity: Unpaid news or comments transmitted through the media, but not necessarily supported by the agency.

Personal Selling: Direct personal communications between the agency representatives and public.

Incentives: Temporary promotions to increase customer usage, e.g., price reduction.

The composition of the target market, demographic, and geographic characteristics, will determine the promotion mix. If the target market covers a large geographic area, then advertising or publicity will be chosen over personal selling (contacts). A recreation group, with a low education level, will have to be reached through means other than newspapers, since their tendency is to read less.

FIGURE 4

Promotion Mix and Component Activities

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY OPTIONS
INFORM	Publicity
	Advertising
	Personal Selling
EDUCATE	Publicity
	Advertising
	Personal Selling
PERSUADE	Publicity
	Advertising
	Personal Selling
	Incentives
REMIND	Publicity
	Personal Selling
	Advertising

Participants - This is the Major P - the customer contact personnel: every employee on the district.

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression"

Jack Gray, Marketing Specialist

Participants become part of the marketing plan through internal marketing efforts, (Land Between the Lakes Workshop) customer service training, and involvement in developing the district marketing plan. This is essential for the plan to work and necessary since marketing = customer satisfaction = customer service, and all district employees have customer service responsibilities.
Full district participation cannot be overemphasized.

Physical Evidence - The total environment surrounding the service is the physical evidence. It is the packaging of the REC OPS being offered. The forest's market research, specifically focus groups, will reveal the customer perceptions and needs that are most affected by physical evidence, e.g., cleanliness, lighting, signing. Forest Service employees are part of the "recreation package", as well as participants. They are "consumed" during the recreation activity by their presence and become part of the

recreation experience. Therefore, their role is pivotal in determining customer satisfaction.

The FS appearance is also physical evidence. The FS uniform, demeanor and attitude determine the FS image. It is that image our customers take home with them - to share with their friends and reflect upon. It is that image that decides whether or not they return.

Process - The procedures and management through which the services are provided make up the Process P. The scheduling of events and services (interpretative programs, campground operation schedule, office hours), should respond to the target market's time needs. The manner in which the district handles customer complaints, responds to peak demand periods, and manages the reservation system are process elements that must be addressed during plan development. The worst thing we can do is invite the public to our forests and not be prepared for their arrival.

In summarizing the 7 P's of the marketing mix, it becomes evident of the interaction necessary to develop the "Game Plan" for reaching and satisfying target markets. What is even more evident is the importance of a customer service orientation on the district. The Product, Participants, Physical Evidence, and Process P's, which will be effective only through total employee involvement and full district participation in the marketing plan.

Action Programs

The Action Programs answer the what, who, and when in implementing the marketing plan. At a minimum, a marketing action plan should identify the following:

- -Objective
- -Strategy - 7 P's
- -Target Market
- -Benefits
- -Partnerships
- -Who is responsible for accomplishment
- -Completion Date
- -Evaluation - Establish Benchmarks

FIGURE 5 illustrates one approach to an action plan.

FIGURE 5

Marketing Action Plan

Objectives

Increase visitation at Blanchard Springs Caverns from November through February by 30%.

Target Market

Market Area: St. Louis metropolitan area, Little Rock metropolitan area; other population centers of 20,000+ within 3 hours drive of caverns.

Segement:
- Age - 40-65 years
- Income - $30,000+
- Education - College educated
- Family Makeup - Single or married with older (14 Yrs+) or no children at home.

Benefits: Provide opportunity to experience a geologically unique resource during a less crowded period at a reduced price. Package tours available with Ozark Crafts Center providing opportunity for seasonal shopping while visiting caves.

Strategy:
- Price - 25% less than regular ticket cost
- Place - Make package tours available through travel agents
- Promotion - St. Louis and Little Rock major papers: travel sections and Sunday supplements; special off-season brochure; public service announcements on radio stations in target market area.

Service - Provide information on complimentary activities on district and in immediate area.

Partnerships: Ozark Crafts Center, St. Louis and Little Rock travel agents, AAA, regional and local tourism associations, Arkansas State Parks and Tourism Department.

Responsible Person: Forest Marketing Coordinator
District Marketing Liasion/Coordinator

Completion Date: Set according to activity: Travel agents - July 1
Media Contacts - Ocober 1, Brochures distributed - September 1.

Evaluation Benchmarks:

-The 5 year visitation average from November through February has been 220 per month.

-Our visitors have been mostly from in state.

-Older married couples and widows make up the majority of the visitors.

-The visit was not specifically planned - part of other travel plans.

-Visitors do not know what services to expect.

Budget

The marketing budget should reflect the forest recreation goals and district objectives and emphasis. During the first year of the marketing plan, funding should be identified for:

-Market research

-Internal marketing workshops

-Customer service training

-Marketing staff salary

-Marketing training

Depending on the size of the forest partnership arrangements, and how ambitious the marketing effort is, $35,000-$40,000 would be a realistic funding range.

Partnerships

Partnerships to supplement the marketing budget and provide marketing opportunities should be actively pursued. As noted under Internal Assessment and Marketing Research, contacts and partnerships should be made with:

Contact	Service/Support/Expertise
Universities	Marketing Research
	Marketing Plan
Government Agencies	Marketing Research
	Promotions
	Internal Marketing
	Customer Service Training

Tourism Industry	Marketing Research
	Marketing Mix P's
Recreation Activity Groups	Marketing Research
	Promotions

Associations

Forming a forest marketing and tourism association will facilitate meeting marketing objectives; APPENDIX H is a proposal for a marketing association feasiblity study which would be a starting place in determining interest and support. Some benefits from a marketing association would be to:

-Provide marketing expertise

-Conduct user surveys

-Share customer use data and other marketing research

-Provide financial support in publishing information materials

-Conduct fund raisers to support specific recreation or marketing projects

-Continual participation in the Challenge Cost-Share Program

Evaluation

The following questions should be asked when evaluating the marketing plan:

1. Did we reach our objective?
2. Did we reach all of target market including nontraditional users?
3. Did we reach our market segment?

4. Did we provide wanted benefits?

5. Did we provide wanted services?

Surveying our targeted customers upon leaving the recreation site will answer our specific questions and provide additional market research data. The market research that was contracted (see Market Research) should have recommended a system for collecting customer use data.

SUMMARY

A national forest marketing plan makes sense. Our customers, the public we serve, are asked, "How can we best serve you?" and a plan is developed to satisfy those service needs.

A national forest marketing plan makes sense because it leads to satisfied customers, which equals satisfied consituents which translates into support for the forest's programs. That support will provide the competitive edge for scarce federal natural resource funding.

A national forest marketing plan makes sense because it realistically focuses our direction toward the reason we are in business: Caring for the Land and Serving People. The Marketing Plan is totally consistent with our mission, not as just another initiative, but a way of doing business.

> "Marketing is more than a set of general activities; it is a management philosophy which describes an organization's attitude toward its various clientele and goals."(21)

Marketing can work in the national forest system, but only with complete understanding and total involvement and commitment at the district level. The rangers have to make it happen, the district staff will make it happen.

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APPENDIX

A- University of Arkansas-Fayetteville: Marketing Research Proposal Forest Service and Secondary Sources Analysis

B- Arkansas Tech University: Marketing Research Proposal Focus Groups

C- University of Arkansas-Little Rock: Marketing Research Proposal Random Telephone Survey

D- Marketing Research Specifications - Forest Service and Secondary Sources Analysis

E- Marketing Research Specifications - Focus Groups

F- Marketing Research Specifications - Random Telephone Survey

G- Land Between the Lakes Institute Marketing Workshop Proposal and Agenda

H- Marketing Association Feasibility Study Proposal

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS-FAYETTEVILLE MARKETING RESEARCH PROPOSAL-FOREST SERVICE AND SECONDARY SOURCES ANALYSIS

PROPOSAL

DEVELOPING A SECONDARY DATA BANK FOR VISITORS TO THE OZARK-ST. FRANCIS NATIONAL FOREST

BACKGROUND

United States Forest Service personnel are currently developing a marketing plan for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest. This plan has grown out of priorities established in the recently instituted National Recreation Strategy. A number of brainstorming sessions have been held to develop an operational plan for proceeding. It was determined by consensus that the first stage in the market plan should consist of a "situational analysis." In this phase, market research is conducted to determine profiles of users as well as non-users. This information is needed before proceeding with strategy development. This project is a cooperative effort between the USFS and the University of Arkansas to develop this data base.

OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this project is to collect and interpret all completed research pertaining to visitors or non-visitors to the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest. This assessment of secondary data sources should occur prior to the design of primary research studies to save time and dollar resources. Once completed, this data will be summarized and reported to the USFS. This report will contain specific recommendations to aid in market planning and the design of future primary studies. The study could be a one-time effort or develop into a long-term tracking project.

METHODOLOGY

The following procedures would be followed during this project:

1) Identify all secondary data sources pertaining to the Ozark-St. Francis visitor.

2) Obtain summaries, abstracts, or complete computer tape of each source.

3) Summarize data into coherent report with specific applications to market planning.

4) Evaluate all internal data bases within the USFS organization at forest level; give suggestions for developing internal management information systems.

5) Once secondary data is interpreted, give recommendations for primary research to be conducted to complete market information.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT BUDGET

University Match $2000

USFS Match $2500

APPENDIX B
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY
MARKETING RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOCUS GROUPS

MARKET RESEARCH FOR RECREATION PLANNING: Using Focus Groups to Segment Recreation Markets on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest

INTRODUCTION

Focus groups are an in-depth question and discussion research method utilizing particular homogenous sub-groups that are important users of recreation facilities. A defined agenda with professional interviewers leading the discussion are usually employed for the data gathering phase.

The purpose of focus groups is to obtain needs assessment information from a small number of users that represent a larger sub-group, for example, a group of 6-10 charge account customers from a retail store would be asked to sit in on a 2-4 hour session where their preferences for an assortment of new products would be ascertained. Rather than buying, advertising , marketing and stocking a large supply of new products, thestore would like to find out which items are preferred by their existing customers and at what price or under what conditions they wouldactually buy such a product.

This allows th estore to "target" a special segment of their market (charge account customers) and find out in-depth, what motivates them to buy a particular product.

In a similar manner, the Forest Service needsto identify, contact, and interface on a regular basis with their special kinds of users or clients. Focus groups use this in-depth discussion strategy, whereas traditional market research or needs assessment uses mailed questionnaires or random surveys of all the potential population of oftimes heterogeneous users and non-users.

The purpose of this study is to identify 5-6 major user groups of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest, contact and assemble a representative small sample of each subgroup and conduct an in-depth discussion and analysis which raises particular topics or questions about their personal response to the outdoor recreation market, in particular, their use of Forest Service lands and facilities

All discussions will be held on the ATU campus during February and March of 1989. Results of the discussion and recommendations to the Forest Service will be supplied in a final report on or before March March 31, 1989.

APPENDIX C
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS-LITTLE ROCK
MARKETING RESEARCH PROPOSAL RANDOM TELEPHONE SURVEY

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK
2801 SOUTH UNIVERSITY • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204

Center for Research and Public Policy
371-2986

Division of Governmental Studies
371-2986

Division of Demographic Research
371-2992

Division of Business Studies
371-2992

Division of Regional Economic Analysis
371-1976

Arkansas Public Administration Consortium
371-2991

December 16, 1988

Mr. Frank Lewis, District Ranger
Ozark-St. Francis National Forests
U. S. Forest Service
Rt. 1 Box 36
Hector, AR 72843

Dear Frank,

Enclosed is the proposal you requested for a telephone survey and report covering the state of Arkansas and selected Metropolitan Statistical Areas to assist you in developing a market plan for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests.

If you have any questions concerning the proposals, please give me a call. We are looking forward to assisting you in your undertaking.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

T. W. Blackwood
Division Chief

Enclosures

TWB/rl

PROPOSAL TO OZARK-ST. FRANCIS NATIONAL FORESTS
U. S. FOREST SERVICE
FRANK LEWIS, DISTRICT RANGER

The Division of Business Studies (DBS) of the Center for Research and Public Policy proposes to conduct for and in conjunction with Frank Lewis, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, and the U. S. Forest Service:

(1) A telephone survey to determine the present and potential users of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests and what these users desire in terms of recreational opportunities.

The results of the survey will provide current data to support the development of a marketing plan and marketing strategy for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests.

The survey population will be comprised of persons residing in the state of Arkansas and of persons residing in the following Metropolitan Statistical Areas:

Memphis, TN
St. Louis, MO
Tulsa, OK
Oklahoma City, OK
Dallas, TX

The sample size will be approximately 400. The sample will be produced by a random digit dialing methodology developed by the Center for Research and Public Policy. The sample size will produce a sampling error of no greater than +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Questionnaire construction will be a joint effort of DBS and the Client, with approval of the final draft resting with the Client. Final form of the questionnaire will be approximately 25 close-ended questions that will take no longer than seven (7) minutes to administer by telephone. DBS will administer all pre-testing of the questionnaire so that any confusing, misleading, or ambiguous

questions may be amended.

Telephone interviews will be conducted utilizing a telephone bank located with the offices of Research and Public Policy at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The questionnaires will be administered utilizing the MaCATI (Macintosh Assisted Telephone Interviewing) program. This program eliminates the need for coding and data entry of completed questionnaires. Interviewers are fully trained in the use of the MaCATI program. An interviewer supervisor will be in attendance during all telephone interviewing. Initial telephone calls to the sample population will commence during the afternoon and evening hours of 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m..

DBS will complete an extensive analysis of the data and prepare a detailed report based upon the findings. Three copies of the final report will be provided to the client by March 15, 1989.

The total cost for the survey and report will be $8,800.00. The Division of Business Studies, Center for Research and Public Policy, University of Arkansas at Little Rock will provide an in-kind contribution of $4,000.00. The contract between Frank Lewis, U. S. Forest Service and the Division of Business will be executed by a Memo of Agreement reflecting the net amount due the Division of Business Studies of $4,800.00.

APPENDIX D
MARKETING RESEARCH SPECIFICATIONS
FOREST SERVICE AND SECONDARY SOURCES ANALYSIS

PART I - THE SCHEDULE
SECTION C - DESCRIPTIONS/SPECIFICATIONS/WORK STATEMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS - FAYETTEVILLE
CENTER FOR ARKANSAS RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

SCOPE OF CONTRACT

The purpose of this contract is to conduct marketing research in support of the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest Marketing Plan. In cooperation with the Forest Service, the Contractor shall: (1) collect completed research on the customers of the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest; (2) analyze and interpret the collected research; (3) prepare recommendations based on the research analysis; (4) prepare recommendations for the design of future primary studies.

This will be a cost-share contract. The contractor shall be reimbursed for a portion of his costs, not to exceed $2,500.00.

DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The National Recreation Strategy directs the National Forests to determine who the National Forest recreating public is and what recreation opportunities they want on National Forest land. Marketing research is the means of identifying customer needs to achieve customer satisfaction. The Contractor shall conduct market research of customer use data provided by the Forest Service and secondary source data on recreation user trends and users of federal, state, and private recreation facilities within the Forest's market areas.

The marketing research will be conducted at various Forest Service sites and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

GOVERNMENT FURNISHED PROPERTY

The Government shall furnish the Contractor with Forest Service collected information on customers and allow the Contractor to collect customer use data at Forest Service sites. The times and methods of data collection are subject to the approval of the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The objective of this project is to collect and interpret all completed research pertaining to visitors or non-visitors to the Ozark-St.Francis National Forests. The analysis and interpretation will contain specific recommendations to aid in market planning and the design of future primary studies. The Contractor shall:

1. With Forest Service assistance, collect and interpret all completed research pertaining to visitors or non-visitors to the Ozark-St.Francis National Forests.

2. Identify, analyze, and interpret all secondary data pertaining to the Ozark-St.Francis National Forests recreation user.

3. Summarize all data into a coherent report with specific applications to market planning.

4. Evaluate all internal data bases within the Forest Service organization at the forest level and provide suggestions for developing internal management information systems.

5. After secondary data interpretation, provide recommendations for primary research to be conducted to complete market information.

As part of the proposal, the Contractor shall submit a list of the tasks to be accomplished and a timetable for their completion.

MEASUREMENT AND PAYMENT

The Forest Service will reimburse the Contractor for up to $2,500.00 of his costs. The Contractor shall submit one statement of his charges to the COR at the completion of the research, interpretation, and submission of recommendations. Any travel costs paid by the Government will be in accordance with Government travel regulations.

APPENDIX E
MARKETING RESEARCH SPECIFICATIONS
FOCUS GROUPS

PART I - THE SCHEDULE
SECTION C - DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS/WORK STATEMENT
MARKETING RESEARCH USING FOCUS GROUPS
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

SCOPE OF CONTRACT

The purpose of this contract is to conduct marketing research in support of the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest Marketing Plan. In cooperation with the Forest Service, the Contractor shall: (1) conduct focus group discussions with customers of the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest; (2) analyze and interpret the collected findings from the focus groups; and (3) prepare recommendations on the analysis.

This will be a cost-share contract. The contractor shall be reimbursed for a portion of his costs, not to exceed $3,625.00.

DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The National Recreation Strategy directs the National Forests to determine who the National Forest recreating public is and what recreation opportunities they want on National Forest land. Marketing research is the means of identifying customer needs to achieve customer satisfaction. The Contractor shall conduct market research using focus groups consisting of recreation users on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests.

Focus groups are an in-depth question and discussion research method utilizing particular homogenous sub-groups that are important users of recreation facilities. A defined agenda with professional interviewers leading the discussion shall be employed for the data gathering phase.

The purpose of focus groups is to obtain needs assessment information from a small number of users that represent a larger sub-group.

All discussions will be held on the Arkansas Tech University campus in Russellville, Arkansas or at selected Forest Service sites. Results of the discussion and recommendations to the Forest Service will be supplied in a final report on or before March 31,1989.

GOVERNMENT FURNISHED PROPERTY

The Government shall identify 4 major user groups of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest to be the focus groups and assist the Contractor in finding suitable sites to conduct focus group discussions at Forest Service locations.

APPENDIX E

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The objective of this project is to identify 4 major user groups of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest, contact and assemble a representative small sample of each group and conduct an in-depth discussion and analysis which raises topics or questions about their personal response to the outdoor recreation market, particularly their use of Forest Service lands and facilities. Recommendations from the analysis of the discussions will be used in preparing the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest Recreation Marketing Plan.

The Contractor shall:

1. Select a sample of user groups or clients for a focus group discussion from a selected list prepared by the Forest Service. The list shall include, but not be limited to:

    1. Single parent families
    2. Camping and picnicking groups
    3. Blanchard Springs Caverns visitors
    4. Hunting and fishing parties

2. Conduct a focus group discussion with each sample group on the ATU campus or selected interview sites.

3. Analyze the focus group observations and results.

4. Submit recommendations to the Forest Service on how to best meet the needs of the user groups as addressed in a marketing plan.

As part of the proposal, the Contractor shall submit a list of the tasks to be accomplished and a timetable for their completion.

MEASUREMENT AND PAYMENT

The Forest Service will reimburse the Contractor for up to $3,625.00 of his costs. The Contractor shall submit one statement of his charges to the COR at the completion of the focus group discussions, analysis, and submission of recommendations. Any travel costs paid by the government will be in accordance with government travel regulations.

APPENDIX F
MARKETING RESEARCH SPECIFICATIONS
RANDOM TELEPHONE SURVEY

PART I - THE SCHEDULE
SECTION C - DESCRIPTIONS/SPECIFICATIONS/WORK STATEMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS - LITTLE ROCK
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLIC POLICY

SCOPE OF CONTRACT

The purpose of this contract is to conduct marketing research in support of the Ozark-St.Francis National Forest Marketing Plan. In cooperation with the Forest Service, the Contractor shall: (1) Conduct a random telephone survey of present and potential users of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest; (2) analyze and interpret the survey results; (3) prepare a detailed report to support the development of a marketing plan and strategy.

This will be a cost-share contract. The contractor shall be reimbursed for a portion of his costs, not to exceed $4800.00.

DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The National Recreation Strategy directs the national forests to determine who the national forest recreating public is and what recreation opportunities they want on national forest land. Marketing research is the means of identifying customer needs to achieve customer satisfaction. The Contractor shall conduct market research using a random telephone survey with a sample size of approximately 400. The survey population will be comprised of persons residing in the state of Arkansas and of persons in five Metropolitan Statistical Areas.The telephone interviews will be conducted utilizing a telephone bank located with the offices of Research and Public Policy at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. A questionnaire will be administered utilizing the MaCATI (Macintosh Assisted Telephone Interviewing) program.

GOVERNMENT FURNISHED PROPERTY

The government shall identify 5 Metropolitan Statistical Areas to be sampled and have final approval of the questions to be included in the questionnaire.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The objective of this project is to conduct a telephone survey to determine the present and potential users of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest and what these users desire in terms of recreation opportunities. The results of the survey will provide current data to support the development of a marketing plan and strategy. The Contractor shall:

APPENDIX F

1. Conduct a random telephone survey of the following Metropolitan Statistical Areas to include residents of the state of Arkansas.

   --Memphis, Tn.
   --St. Louis, Mo.
   --Tulsa, Ok.
   --Oaklahoma, City, Ok.
   --Dallas, Tx.

2. Construct a questionnaire jointly with the Forest Service (FS) with approval of the final draft resting with the FS. Final form of the questionnaire will be approximately 25 close-ended questions. The Contractor will administer all pre-testing of the questionnaire.

3. Complete an extensive analysis of the survey data and prepare a detailed report based upon the findings that may be used as part of a recreation marketing plan and strategy.

4. Provide three copies of the final report by March 15, 1989.

MEASUREMENT AND PAYMENT

The Forest Service will reimburse the Contractor for up to $4800.00 of his costs. The Contractor shall submit one statement of his charges to the COR at the completion of the research and analysis.

APPENDIX G

LAND BETWEEN THE LAKES INSTITUTE
MARKETING WORKSHOP PROPOSAL AND AGENDA

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
Golden Pond, Kentucky 42231

February 13, 1989

Mr. Franklin Lewis
U.S. Forest Service
Rt. 1 Box 36
Hector, AR 72843

Dear Frank:

Our discussion on the phone today made us that much more enthusiastic to be assisting you with your marketing training. Ann, Jim, and I look forward to working with you and the Ozark-St. Francis staff. In this letter I will summarize our discussion and propose an agenda. We are open to helping in whatever way we can, so please modify this plan to suit your needs.

We will be in Russellville March 21, 22, and 23 to conduct training for a group that consists of a forest supervisor, 7 district rangers, 2 assistant rangers from each district, a support services supervisor from each district, key forest supervisor's office staff, and perhaps the recreation director from Region 8. Eighty per cent of the 50 people in attendance will have toured LBL and are familiar with the LBL marketing program. You will supply a screen, overhead projector, and flip charts. We will bring a complete notebook for each participant. It will include sections we will not cover as well as those we will.

Your overall goals for the session are that the participants will:

1. Understand what marketing is.

2. Become "marketing ready;" that is, be ready to rely on input from visitors in guiding their decisions - as opposed to using a "products offered" approach.

3. Improve their ability to respond to special interest groups.

4. Gain the knowledge necessary to effectively manage their public image.

5. Recognize marketing as a credible way of accomplishing their goals.

6. Feel ownership over the start they have on <u>their</u> marketing plan.

7. Recognize the barriers to marketing and know approaches to handling them.

8. Develop an understanding of their roles in the marketing process.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

2

Frank Lewis
February 13, 1989

The schedule is as follows:

Tuesday March 21

FOCUS GROUP: 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

We will conduct a focus group activity with 10 to 12 people who represent a cross section of employees attending the full workshop. This focus group will identify and discuss barriers to marketing in your forest. It will also examine the existing public image of your forest. Information obtained here will be used in the Situation Assessment activity the following day.

Wednesday March 22

ORIENTATION: 8:00 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.

You will begin the session by discussing the National Recreation Strategy and defining who will play what general roles in implementing the Strategy in your forest.

INTRODUCTION: 8:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

We will present a very brief (5 minutes) case study of Land Between The Lakes (LBL). Since most of the participants will have seen LBL's program first-hand, this session is intended to refresh memories and update information. The main point will be that marketing works. The case study will lead into a discussion of what marketing is and why public agencies should be doing it. We will consider the broader aspects of marketing, including "relationship marketing", community support, image-management, and other recreation and well as non-recreation issues.

SITUATION ASSESSMENT: 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Next we will go into depth on situation assessment. We will build on your model, with the National Recreation Strategy as the core, flanked by internal assessment on one side and external on the other. Under this section, we will cover items listed on the enclosed flowcharts under "Situation Assessment." We will also include image assessment. You may have the participants collect thoughts at a district level relative to those items. Our activity, then, will be to work as a group toward forming mission and goals on a forest level. Since each district will have its own marketing plan, we will also discuss those items in depth on the district level.

Frank Lewis
February 13, 1989

MARKETING STRATEGY: 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We will introduce our system for segmentation, targeting, and positioning with ample attention to the participants having an opportunity to work their problems through the worksheets. This will be accomplished in teams, and you will arrange seating so each district will have a chance to discuss their particular problems. We will rely heavily on your data and analysis for use in examples and to assist participants in forming a strategy.

Time permitting, we will include a unit on the strategies of marketing ideas, which will also include image management.

You may use Jack Gray for a one and one half-hour block in "horizontal marketing" at some point in the session.

Thursday March 23

IMPLEMENTATION: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Of the four modules we usually cover in this section, the highest priority is Internal Marketing. We will spend the most time in this area. We will also introduce key concepts in Customer Relations and in Marketing Information Systems.

Perhaps even more than most of the workshops we conduct, we will look for a very high level of involvement on the part of the participants. We will take every opportunity to use actual issues in examples of how to solve problems with marketing techniques. These issues will be identified by the group during the session, and you have supplied the following problems for use in this way:

1. Implementation of a forest ORV plan.

2. Appeals of District Compartment Prescriptions (mini-land management plans).

3. Implementation of a District Marketing Plan.

4. Providing fuelwood to the public when demand exceeds supply.

There is no lack of content in these issues or in the material to be covered in the workshop. We will come ready for some in-depth discussions.

4

Frank Lewis
February 13, 1988

Enclosed are samples of a workshop notebook and worksheets. These will be modified and updated as needed for your workshop.

Sincerely,

Dick

Richard W. Paterson,
Supervisor, Project Development
Land Between The Lakes, TVA

Enclosures

APPENDIX H
MARKETING ASSOCIATION
FEASIBILITY STUDY PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL

DEVELOPING AN OZARK-ST. FRANCIS NATIONAL FOREST TOURISM PROMOTION ASSOCIATION: A FEASIBILITY STUDY

Background

A central focus of the USFS National Recreation Strategy is the formation of partnerships. Partnerships between the USFS and other individuals and agencies which are designed to pursue projects of joint interest. While many examples of successful partnerships can now be cited, the potential for additional partnerships has scarcely been tapped. Little research has been conducted examining both the barriers to and opportunities for future partnerships. The University of Arkansas--specifically Steven Selin, Assistant Professor and Kim Beason, Doctoral Student--propose to conduct a joint project examining this topic. This project will become the focus of Kim Beason's dissertation. The two investigators hope to solicit USFS support for this project in the way of a match to the university's investment in the project.

Objectives

Specifically, the project will examine the potential to form an Ozarks-St. Francis National Forest Tourism Promotion Association. Major objectives are to:

1. Identify all prospective partners determined to have an investment in the national forest area.

2. Determine levels of cooperation demonstrated between prospective partners.

3. Identify factors explaining levels of cooperation demonstrated.

4. Recommend an organizational structure and function which will maximize the potential for future collaboration.

Methodology and Timeline

The actual project will consist of the following steps:

1. Literature review inventorying other cooperative efforts in the recreation and tourism area. Nov'88 - Jan'89.

2. Identification of all prospective partners in proposed Association. Dec'88 - Jan'89.

3. Personal interviews with all identified individuals. Feb'89 - March'89.

4. Mail-out questionnaire to same individuals. April'89.

5. Analysis and write-up. May'89 - June'89.

Benefit to United States Forest Service

In addition to providing Kim with an ideal situation to study cooperative behavior, outcomes from this project should be of practical value to the USFS. Our final report to the USFS will make recommendations concerning:

1. Individuals to include in the Association.

2. The ideal structure and function of this Association.

Joint projects taken on by this group could inject significant private sector resources into the national forest. At the same time, the association would improve communication between public and private interests in the national forest. I also believe this association would enhance the visibility of the USFS organization and the national forest among Arkansans and potential tourists from other states.

Project Budget

University Investment

University grant	$2000	
Kim Beason's time	$2700	(540 hr. at $5 per hour)
Total	$4700	

Proposed USFS Investment

It is important that the USFS match some percentage of the university investment so the project is truely a joint venture. I would like both contributors to have a stake in the outcome.

Rather than asking for a dollar match, I would prefer a USFS match in the form of transportation and lodging. This two items will be a major expense during the personal interview phase of the project. Access to an unmarked USFS vehicle for approximately ten (still tentative pending identification of partners) working days in February will be needed. Could you perhaps lodge Kim in district ranger facilities to defray lodging expenses?

I anticipate the most cost-effective method for Kim to conduct his interviews will be to do it in one block rather than one at a

time. For right now, perhaps we could agree on the general nature of this request. We will contact you as soon as we have the particulars worked out. Kim and I will be in touch with you soon. Let me know if you need additional information.